Leading Diversity Management Practices

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Definition of Key Terms

Equal employment opportunity (EEO): A policy embodied in law that requires employment actions be free from prohibited discrimination, including race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, or disability.

Definition of Key Terms (cont.)

Diversity Management: A process intended to create and maintain a positive work environment where the similarities and differences of individuals are valued, so that all can reach their potential and maximize their contributions to an organization's strategic goals and objectives.

Definition of Key Terms (cont.)

EEO

- Compliance orientation
- Focused on legally protected groups
- Perception of preference
- Grounded in assimilation

Diversity Management

- Results orientation
- Focused on all elements of diversity
- Perception of equality or equity
- Grounded in individuality

Definition of Key Terms (cont.)

Workforce Diversity: Ways in which people in a workforce are similar and different from one another. In addition to the characteristics protected by law, others cited by the literature include but are not limited to background, education, language skills, personality, sexual orientation, and work role.

Agencies Selected to Illustrate Implementation of Leading Practices Identified in GAO-05-90

1. U.S. Coast Guard,
2. National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST),
3. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA),
4. Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP),
5. U.S. Postal Service,
6. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA),
7. Veterans Health Administration (VHA),
8. Food and Drug Administration (FDA),
9. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and
10. National Institutes of Health (NIH).

Nine Leading Practices That Apply to Both Public and Private Sectors

1. Leadership commitment
2. Diversity as part of the strategic plan
3. Diversity linked to performance
4. Measurement
5. Accountability
6. Succession planning
7. Recruitment
8. Employee involvement
9. Diversity training

Leadership Commitment

Vision of diversity demonstrated and communicated throughout an organization by top-level management.

Leadership Commitment Includes

- Communicating support for diversity in newsletters, policy statements, speeches, meetings, and Web sites.

- Providing the organizational resources to support the diversity effort.

- Sending messages to senior management about the seriousness and business relevance of the issue.

Diversity as Part of the Strategic Plan

The diversity strategy and plan are developed and aligned with the organization's strategic plan.

Diversity as Part of the Strategic Plan Includes

- Linking diversity-related activities to support the organization's vision, goals, objectives, and direction in the overall strategic plan.

- Creating measurable ways to support the strategic direction, goals, and objectives of the organization.

- Identifying and justifying the use of resources for diversity initiatives.

Diversity Linked to Performance

Also known as the "business case for diversity," this practice is the understanding that a more diverse and inclusive work environment can yield greater productivity and help improve individual and organizational performance.

Diversity Linked to Performance Includes

- Improving bottom-line results by enhancing productivity and innovation.

- Meeting the needs of a more diverse customer base.

- Reducing costs by reducing turnover, increasing employee retention, and improving employee morale.

Measurement

A set of quantitative and qualitative measures of the impact of various aspects of an overall diversity program.

Measurement Includes

- Using surveys, audits, and focus groups to assess organizational climate, needs, and issues.

- Evaluating the return on investment of diversity management initiatives.

- Evaluating how diversity management initiatives assist in meeting progress toward organizational goals and objectives.

Accountability

The means to ensure that leaders are responsible for diversity by linking their assessment and compensation to the progress of diversity initiatives.

Accountability Includes

- Evaluating managers' performance and their ability to manage a diverse group of employees.

- Making managers' performance ratings and compensation dependent, in part, on their success in achieving diversity-related goals.

- Tying managers' bonuses to successfully achieving diversity outcomes.

Succession Planning

An ongoing, strategic process for identifying and developing an organization's potential future leaders.

Succession Planning Includes

- Forecasting an organization's executive resource needs.

- Creating pipeline and career development programs.

- Selecting individuals from among a diverse pool of qualified candidates to meet executive resource needs.

Recruitment

The process of attracting a diverse supply of qualified applicants for employment.

Recruitment Includes

- Recruiting in minority communities and at predominantly minority-attended colleges and universities.

- Establishing formal relationships with schools that have diverse student populations.

- Partnering with multicultural professional organizations.

Employee Involvement

The contribution of employees in driving diversity throughout an organization.

Employee Involvement Includes

- Establishing diversity councils, task forces, and advisory groups that may identify issues, recommend actions, and help develop initiatives.

Employee Involvement Includes (cont)

- Providing mentoring opportunities.

Employee Involvement Includes (cont)

- Encouraging employees to reach out to the community.

Diversity Training

Organizational efforts to inform and educate management and staff about diversity.

Diversity Training Includes

- Creating training and developmental strategies that support the organization's commitment to diversity.

- Imparting knowledge and organizational awareness and understanding of workplace diversity.

- Developing concrete skills to help communication among and productivity of all employees.

Contact Information

- If you have any questions about this presentation, you may contact

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- Our report on leading diversity management practices (**GAO-05-90**) is available at http://www.gao.gov